The Arboretum of Los Angeles County Annual Report

July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2001

"If you go up to a tree and put your ear to it,
you can hear a soft musical voice in the wood."

Alice Kei Kuwahara, young naturalist, age 9



Dear Friends of The Arboretum,

It is difficult to believe that an entire year has passed since the last State of The Arboretum message. There have been many exciting changes and events these past twelve months that have kept the staff, volunteers, and board of trustees quite busy.

The Arboretum hired Timothy Phillips in January for the position of Superintendent. He is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the facility, allowing me to pursue additional community and corporate strategic alliances, as well as concentrate upon planning, development and fundraising.

Our recently hired Director of Education, Gail Shair, is focusing on the development of many new excellent educational programs as well as an educational master plan to supplement the long-range vision statement. The first course taught in Mandarin, Penjing/Bonsai, was recently offered at The Arboretum with great success.

Marc Hall, Manager of the Gift Shop, along with his staff and volunteers, has created an interesting, fun and wonderfully successful enterprise. In addition, Marc has been decorating the entrance rotunda and the Peacock Café. His creative talents are a valuable asset to those holding parties at The Arboretum.

The Arboretum has recently signed a contract with Nancy Goslee Power & Associates, well-known landscape designers based in Santa Monica, to assist in developing a conceptual long-range plan for additional facilities and, thus, programmatic enhancements at The Arboretum. We expect this plan to be completed and approved by approximately late summer 2002. It will lead to further improvements to our truly world-renowned botanical garden.



The Ethnobotanical Lecture Series, developed by our own James Bauml, PhD, commenced at the beginning of the year with an informative and fascinating presentation by Dr. Michael Balick of The New York Botanical Garden. The field of ethnobotany, which studies the relationship between people and plants, is absolutely exciting and important. Our focus in this area brings significant opportunities to embrace and celebrate the extraordinary cultural diversity of greater Los Angeles. This is a unique direction for a botanical garden and we anticipate a high level of community interest.

The Arboretum's event staff— Sylvia Guerrero, Nadia Balaz and Veda Williams — have been busy organizing a host of new events, as well as promoting our attractive facilities for use by other individuals and organizations. We are also reaching out to our community in other ways: Headed by Lou Ocampo, our membership campaign has brought The Arboretum's total membership base to almost 4,000. At the same time, we have been working to increase financial and in-kind support from individuals, funding agencies, and corporations.

The future of The Arboretum is brighter than ever as we expand our corporate partnerships, including new ventures with L.A. Web, publisher of The Chinese L.A. Daily News and over 300 other cultural newspapers; ACTV (American Chinese Television); Persson's Nursery; Valley Crest Nursery; and Core Media, publisher of several area weekly newspapers. These affiliations will bring tremendous exposure to The Arboretum, spreading the word about our world-class facilities and programs within the communities these leaders serve.

This year has been exciting and productive for the staff and volunteers of The Arboretum. I encourage you to learn more about our accomplishments by reading the following pages. And I encourage you to come by and visit us soon. The future promises to be even more interesting and fruitful — as we continue to create and sustain a great facility for all.

Sincerely,

Peter C. Atkins
Chief Executive Officer

Financial Matters

The Arboretum is co-governed and financially supported by Los Angeles County and The Los Angeles Arboretum Foundation. The County does not separately report numbers for The Arboretum, but estimates indicate that the County contributed approximately $2.0 million to The Arboretum's operations in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2001. In the same year the Foundation contributed nearly $1.6 million, making the Arboretum-wide operating budget for the year approximately $3.6 million. The 2001-2002 year Arboretum-wide operating budget is expected to be approximately $3.9 million, with approximately $1.7 million of that being provided by the Foundation.

We are happy to report that the foundation is in healthy financial condition.

For your information, we summarize the Foundation's balance sheet and operating statement for the year ending June 30th as follows:

Statement of Financial Position — June 30, 2001

Assets		
Cash	$	24,025
Investments, at fair market value		3,584,594
Other assets		380,183
Total Assets	$	3,988,802
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Liabilities	$	107,588
Unrestricted		2,852,047
Temporarily restricted		817,446
Permanently restricted		211,721
Net Assets		3,881,214
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	$	3,988,802

Statement of Activities — For the Year Ended June 30, 2001

Revenue	$	806,259
Net assets released from restriction		65,311
Total Revenue	$	871,570
Expenses		
Administrative		104,423
Fundraising		403,376
Program		1,057,325
Total Expense	$	1,565,124
Decrease in unrestricted net assets		(693,554)
Decrease in temporarily restricted net assets		(65,311)
Decrease in net assets		(758,865)
Net assets at beginning of year		4,640,079
Net assets at end of year	$	3,881,214



From the Foundation President

Dear Friends,

This Annual Report is designed to give you a good idea of the many positive things that have been going on -- and that are anticipated -- at The Arboretum.

Please do read it with interest, and don't hesitate to let us know if you have any question or comments about any aspect of The Arboretum. We'd love to hear from you.

In the meantime, on behalf of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, I want you to know that we appreciate your involvement and support, and that we hope to see you at The Arboretum -- your Arboretum -- often.

Sincerely,

George A. Brumder
President, Board of Trustees
Los Angeles Arboretum Foundation



From the Interim Director of the County Department of Parks & Recreation.

Dear Friends:

I have been with the Department of Parks and Recreation not quite one year now, however, during that time I have come to respect the good working partnership that exists between the Department and the Los Angeles Arboretum Foundation.

Joining the Department as Chief Deputy, I was looking forward to pursuing goals of furthering revenue generation and increasing departmental partnerships with foundations and community groups. As I now fill the role of Interim Director of the Department, I have been impressed with the efforts of the Arboretum Foundation to further public outreach through the addition of educational programs this past year. This expansion of public offerings will, in the end, help in meeting the goal of added revenue.

I would like to thank all who have been involved with the successes we have experienced – Department staff, Foundation members and volunteers alike – for their contributions that are helping to make the Arboretum an ever better facility.

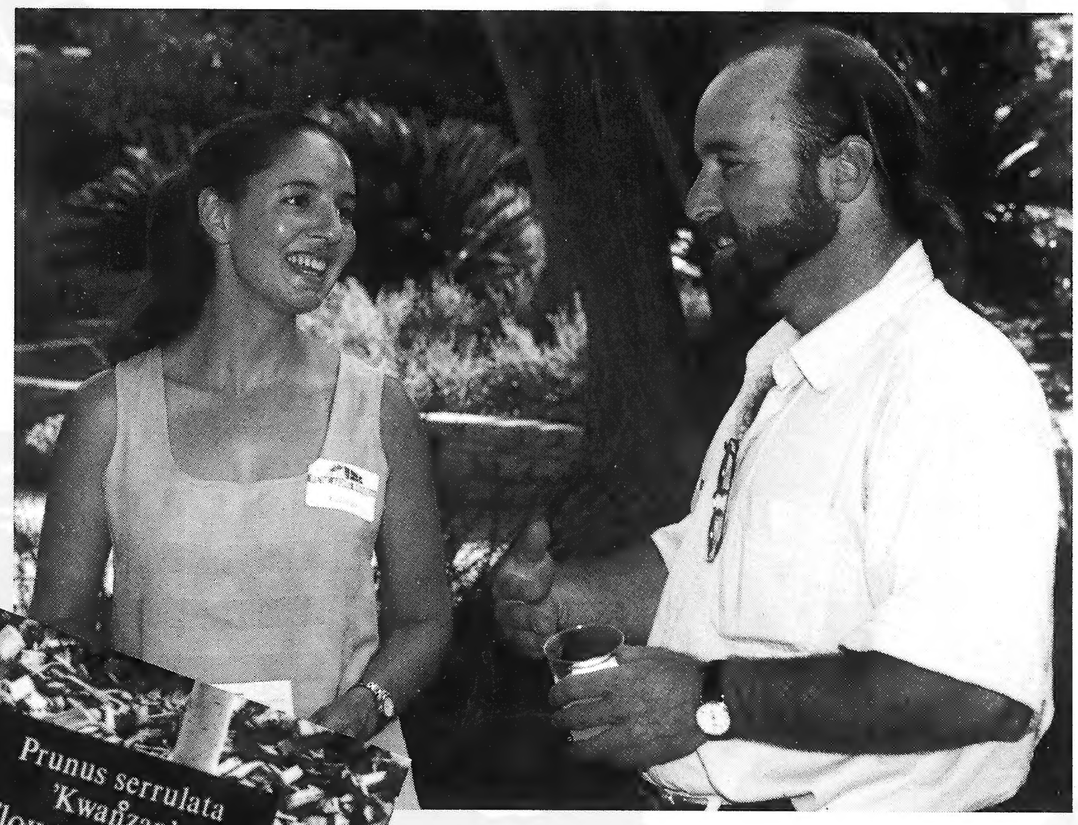
It has been a pleasure working together with you to achieve our mutual objectives. I anticipate accomplishing even more as we continue this valuable partnership.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Smith
Interim Director

Education

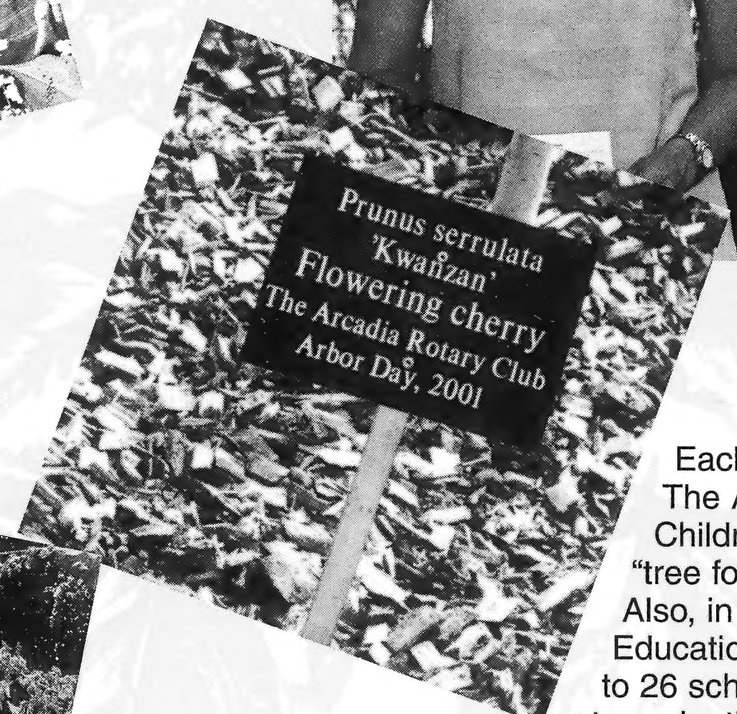
"Education at The Arboretum is about creating sparks of inspiration, about lighting fires of excitement and about feeding endless curiosities."
Gail L. Shair, Director of Education



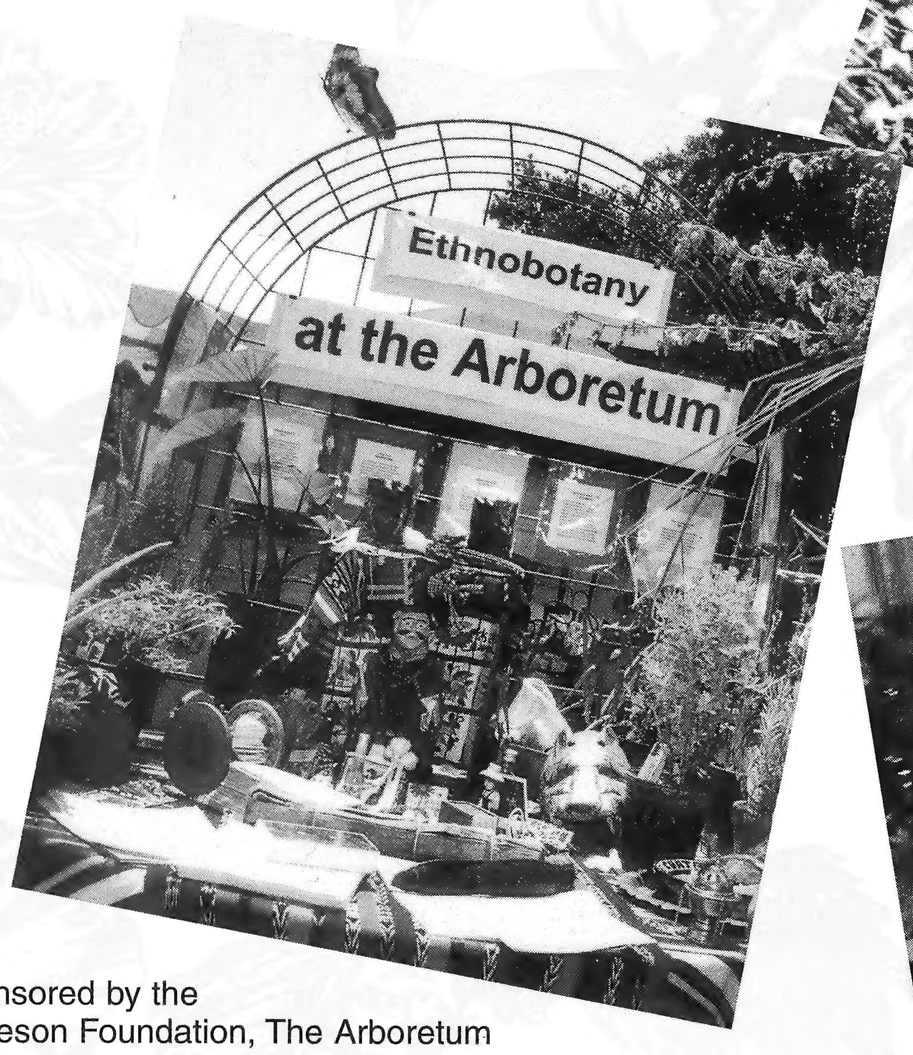
Gail Shair with Big Bugs sculptor David Rogers

Children in the Roots & Shoots program, taught by Leigh Talmo, learned how to garden. Working in teams with classmates and older volunteers, they grew their own food in The Arboretum's Roots & Shoots Garden. This past year, through sponsorship funding, three schools were able to participate in this important program.





Each year the Arcadia Rotary Club sponsors The Arboretum's Arbor Day celebration. Children from a local Arcadia school plant a "tree for tomorrow" on The Arboretum grounds. Also, in conjunction with the Environmental Education Fair, The Arboretum donated 78 trees to 26 schools through the Green City Grant tree-planting program.



Sponsored by the Jameson Foundation, The Arboretum launched a new lecture series featuring world-renowned ethnobotanists. Dr. Michael Balik of the New York Botanical Garden spoke in April and Dr. James Duke, retired USDA agriculturist, spoke in June. The series continues October 10 with Dr. Wade Davis, Explorer-in-Residence, National Geographic Society and on December 5 with Dr. Mark Plotkin, President, Amazon Conservation Team.



Arboretum classes and workshops attracted over 1500 participants during the last year. Over twenty new classes were offered including garden workshops taught in Spanish and Chinese, Botanical Art and Family Gardening. A fall Young Naturalist program for 7-13 year olds and a new summer "Arboretum Adventures for Kids" camp, featuring 'Rad Rainforests and Tropical Treehouses' and 'Patchwork Garden' programs, for children 5-11 years old were launched.

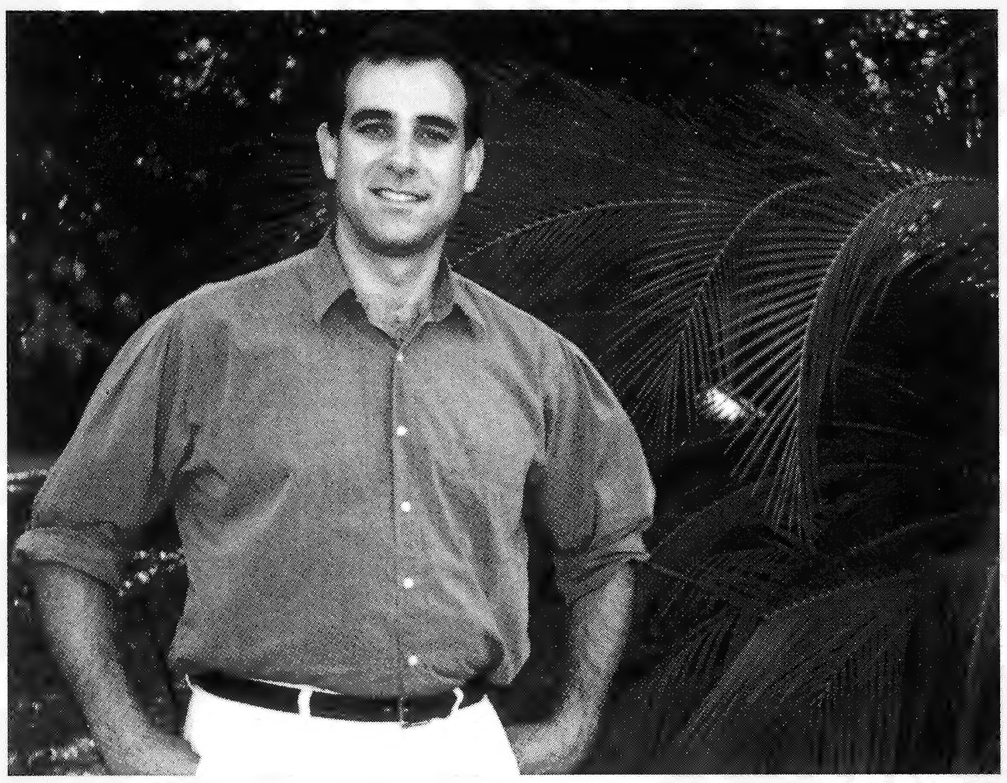


Jill Berry, Education Program Manager, talks with Stephanie Georgieff, host of the popular "Murder in the Garden" Medieval Mystery "Tour & Taste" program. "Movie Memories" along with two new programs, "Ethnobotanical Expeditions" and "Prehistoric Garden" walks completed this year's program.

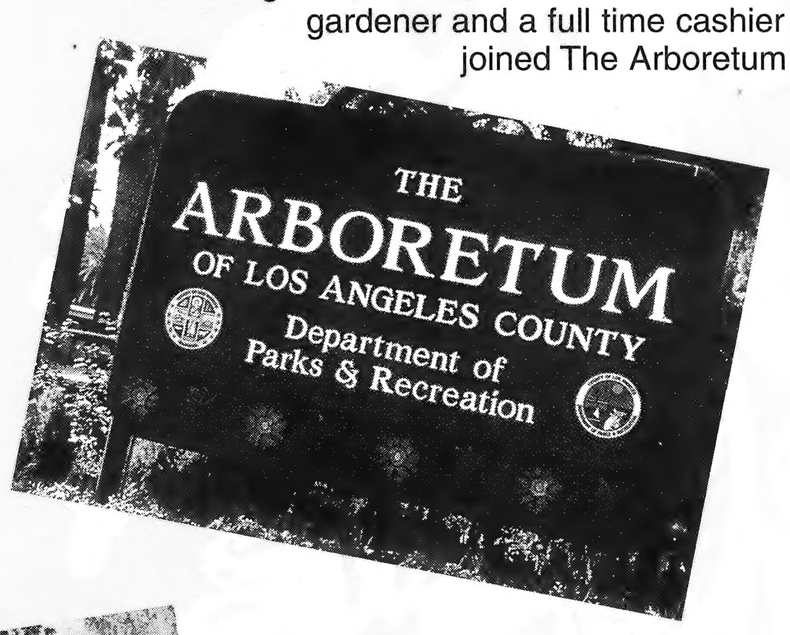
Buildings & Grounds

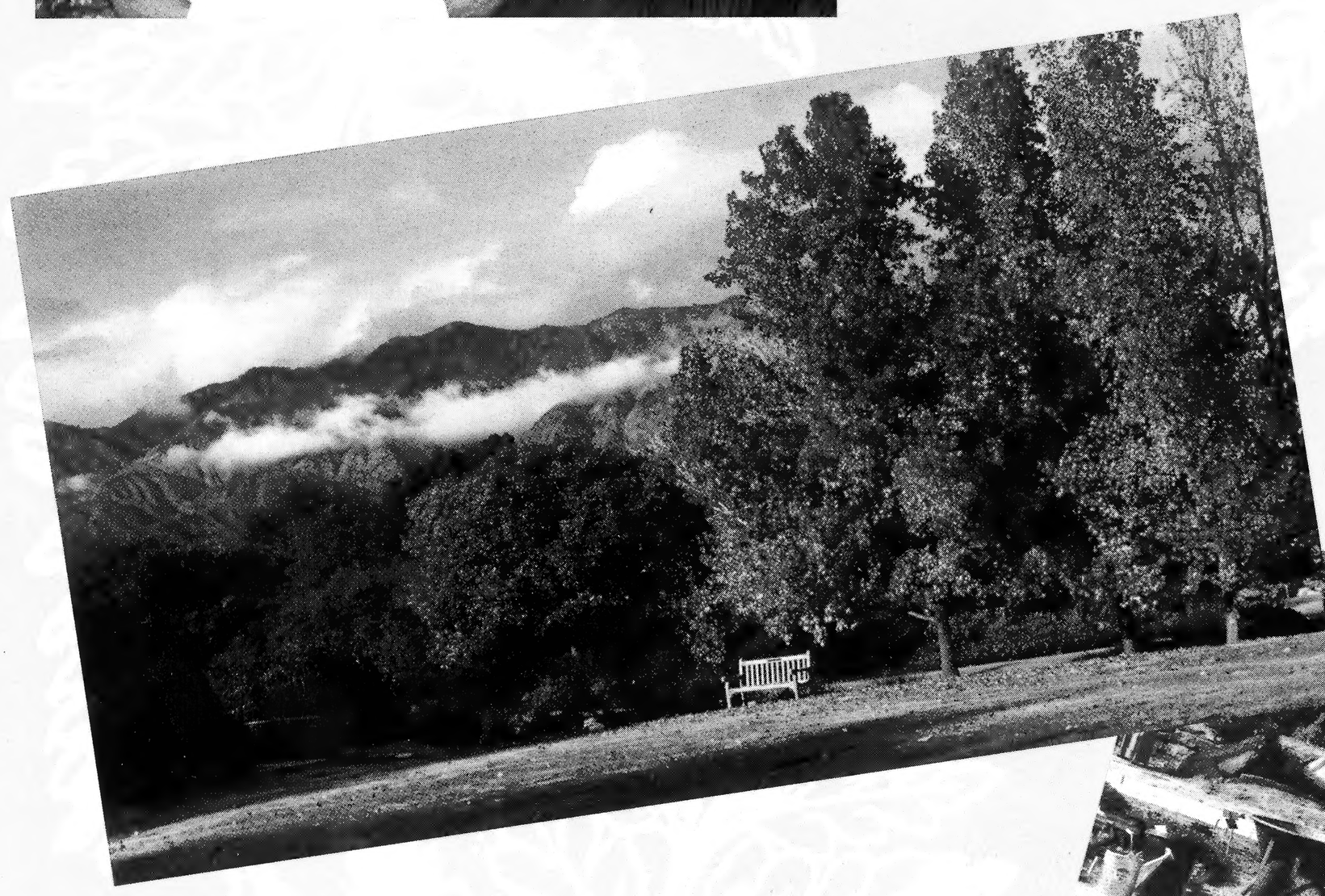
"The restoration of The Arboretum to world-class stature is underway. I encourage all to come and see the improvements that have been made. The efforts of the staff can be seen throughout our botanical treasures and collections."

Timothy Phillips, Superintendent

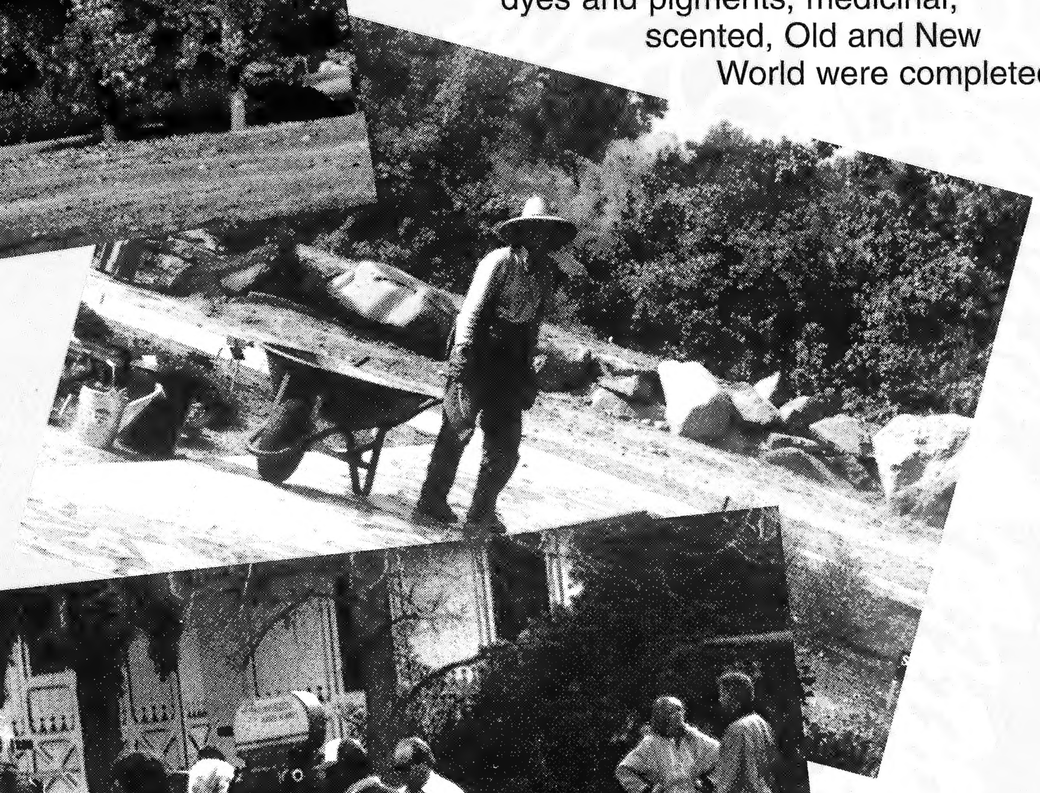


Total fiscal year attendance to The Arboretum increased 14.6%, school field trips increased 23%, class & workshop attendance increased 80% and 27.6% more children visited The Arboretum over last year.. In addition, two new plant nursery workers, an Herb Garden Curator, a Wedding Coordinator, one new assistant gardener and a full time cashier joined The Arboretum staff.





The Herb Garden renovation continued to move forward. New paths were added, the irrigation system expanded and custom redwood arbors and benches were donated. Under the direction of the new curator, Joan McGuire, planting themes including culinary, dyes and pigments, medicinal, scented, Old and New World were completed.



Transition to a "Least Toxic Best Practice" approach to cultivation is underway including a weed abatement method that balances environmental concerns along with the need to control noxious weeds.



Since 1937 The Arboretum has been a back lot setting for the movie and television industries. In addition to the recently released films, "Little Nicky" and "Bedazzled", 109 other film/photo sessions used The Arboretum grounds as a venue during the last year. The much needed revenues are used to help maintain The Arboretum grounds.

Special Events & Fundraisers

When you are working on something fun, doing something you enjoy and contributing to the success of an event that benefits a passion – well, it doesn't get better."

Sylvia Guerrero, Director, Special Events



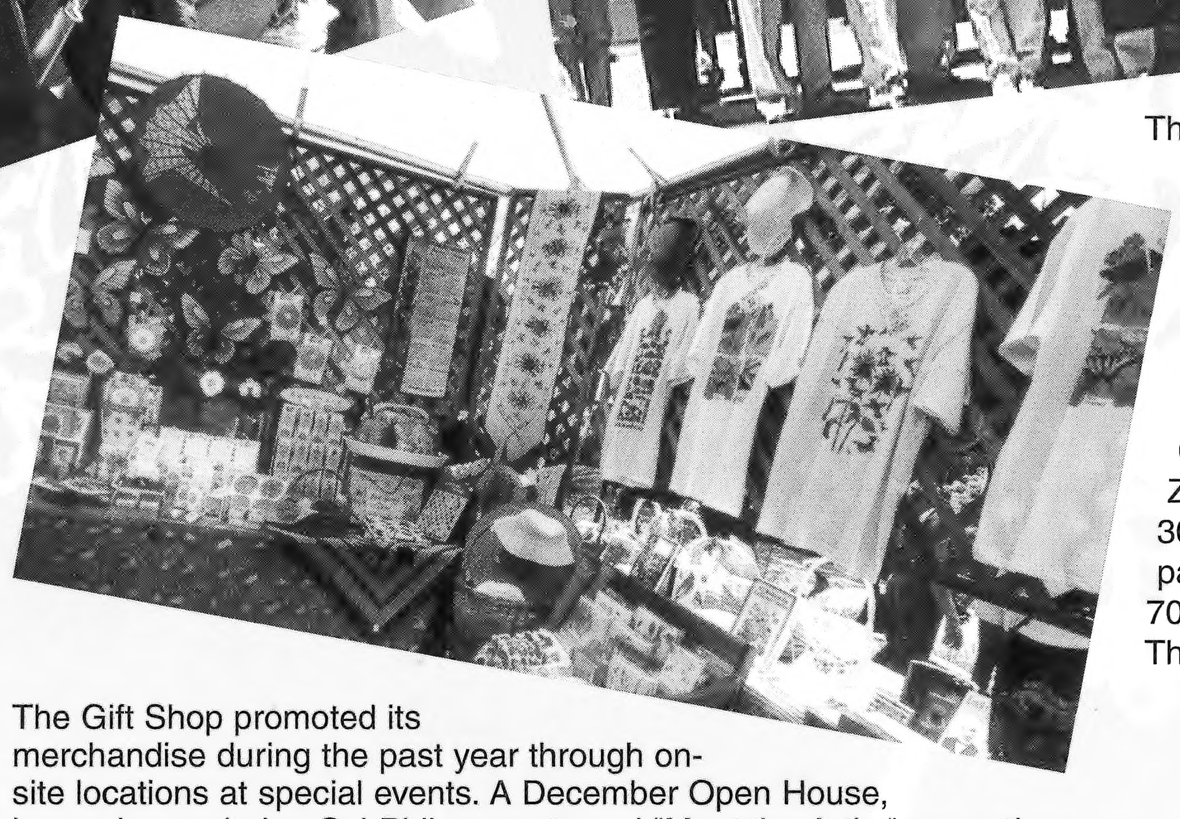
BIG BUG education programs included 14 Sundays of "Family Fun Days" to educate and entertain. Bug lessons, crafts, face painting, plays and music provided a gigantic learning experience for the entire family. A $10,000 grant from Wells Fargo provided transportation for many inner city schools, parks and summer camps came to see the BIG BUGS.



David Rogers' BIG BUGS sculptures were brought to The Arboretum to help build awareness and attendance. The results were as BIG as the BIG BUGS – a 41% increase in attendance, a 57% increase in gift shop sales and a 25% increase in new memberships during the event.



This past spring 460 photo enthusiasts participated in "Beyond the Camera Lens", the first annual Asian community-wide photo contest co-sponsored by The Arboretum and L.A Web, publisher of the Chinese LA Daily News, the Zhong Guo Daily News and 300 other multicultural newspapers. The event attracted 700 new guests to The Arboretum.



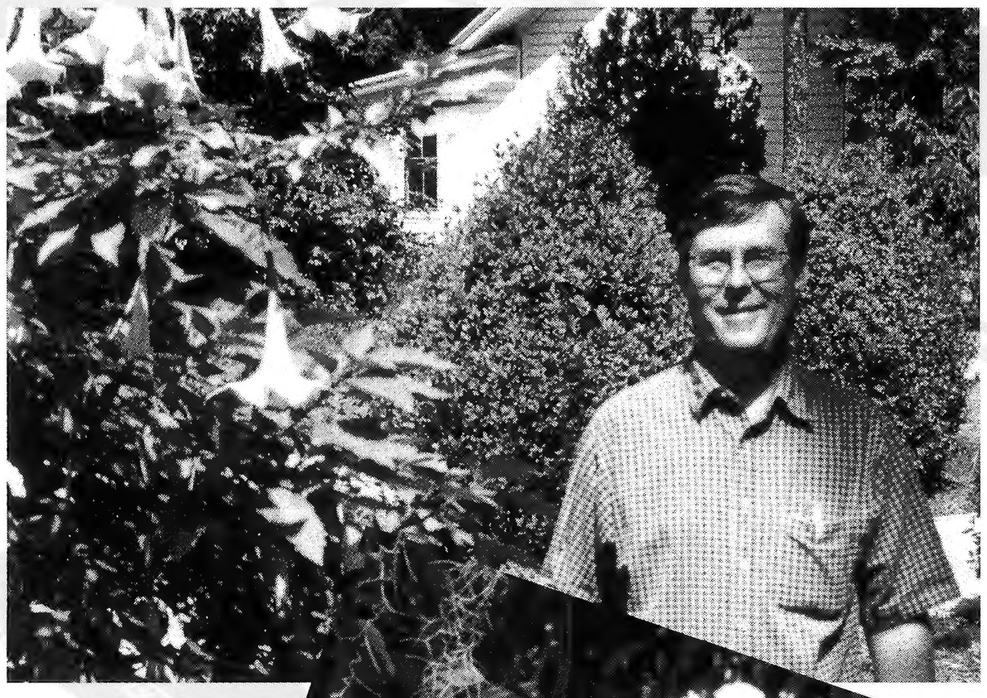
Baldwin Bonanza 2001 was the BIGGEST and the BEST fundraiser to date. An extensive plant selection and Garden Galleries "Design ideas for favorite places and unlikely spaces," brought a 36% increase in attendance, a 33% increase in membership and a 25% increase in gift shop sales over Baldwin Bonanza 2000.

The Gift Shop promoted its merchandise during the past year through on-site locations at special events. A December Open House, longer hours during Cal-Phil concerts and "Meet the Artist" promotions were also successful. Overall sales performance increased 12.6% for the year.

Plant Collections

"The Arboretum's plant collections are arranged primarily by their geographic origins. Future collections will highlight the floras in the five Mediterranean climate zones of the world. Last year, we added 532 new plant accessions to our computerized database."

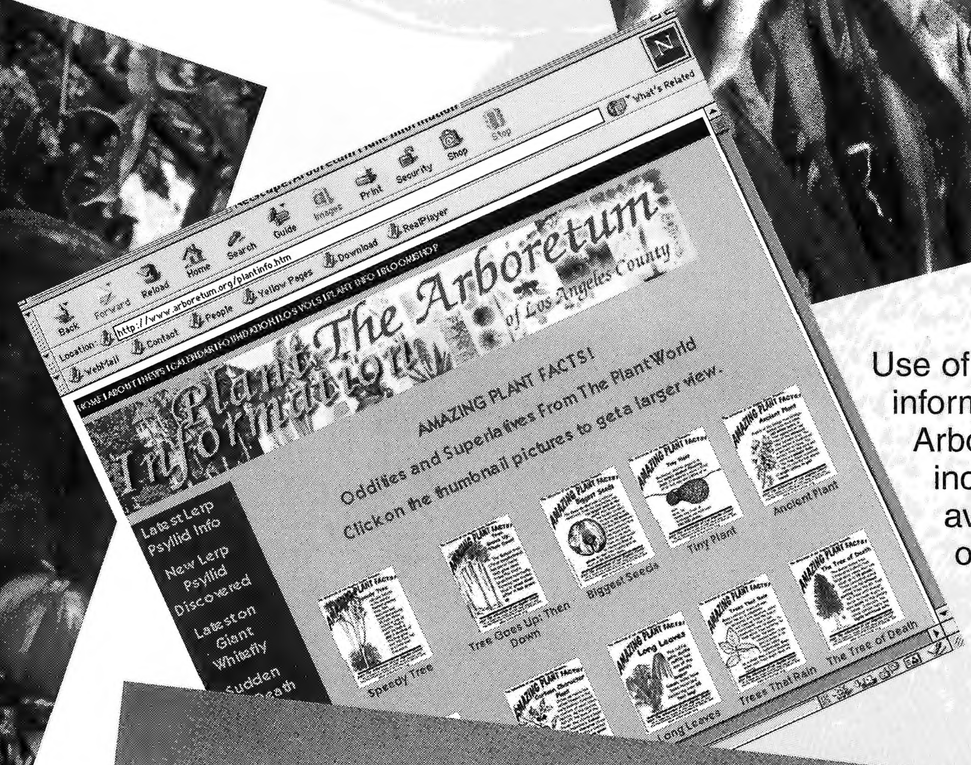
Jim Bauml, Senior Biologist, Resident Ethnobotanist



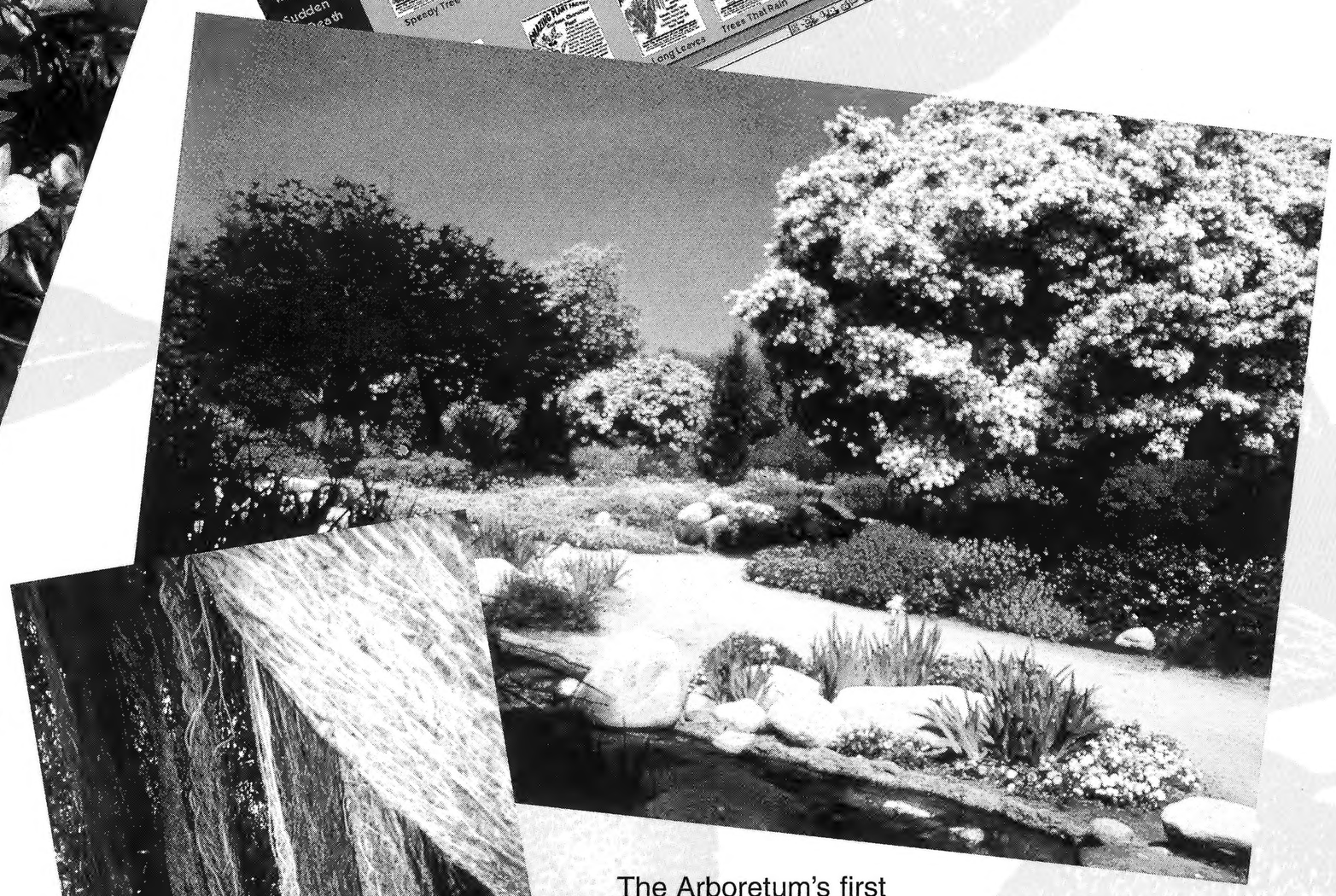
The Arboretum's unique Japanese Iris Collection includes over 35 varieties of *Iris ensata*, the largest of all irises. The collection is celebrated with a Japanese Iris Festival in early summer to highlight its blooming period.







Use of the website to disseminate plant information, as well as general Arboretum information, saw significant increases over the last year. The average weekly total of sessions on the website were 1962.



The Arboretum Orchid Collection, unique in its emphasis on natural species, is one of the largest in any botanical garden. It includes more than 10,000 plants and is housed in five greenhouses covering 6,000 square feet. The collection is currently being inventoried and relabeled; the database is being updated through various grants and sponsorships.

Among many unique specimens of plants that can be found at The Arboretum is an exceptional specimen of the Banyan Fig. This tree has columns of aerial roots that hang from the main branches and form new trunks.



The Arboretum's first endowed garden, The Kallam Perennial Garden is designed to educate and inspire guests to find joy in creating their own personal garden. Within the garden you can find examples of rainbow, butterfly, sun & shade and rock garden designs.

Los Voluntarios
The Arboretum Volunteers

"This past year The Arboretum's 127 acres were a home away from home for the 257 active and sustaining volunteers who contributed 34,000 hours of service."

Virginia Stein President, Los Voluntarios



Los Vols docents led 353 tours of The Arboretum for 2,956 students. Two tours were offered to third through fifth graders, "Early California History" and "Plants of Our World." Students also came for self-guided class tours, coordinated by the Vols as well.



The Queen Anne Cottage Christmas Open House, a holiday tradition, received TV coverage this past year, which brought in many first-time guests. Los Vols members, who maintain the Cottage throughout the year, greeted visitors and led tours. The Cottage is also open on Mother's Day.

The success of Baldwin Bonanza is always highly dependent upon Los Vols support. This year, they provided 336 assignments/shifts in support of the 2001 Festival. Their duties ranged from propagating plants to cashiering. In addition to supporting special events like Baldwin Bonanza, Los Vols help in the gift shop, education greenhouse, historical buildings and information services.



Los Vols officers for 2001-2002 are: (left to right) Virginia Stein, President; Jeannine Kiertzner, First Vice President; Barbara Telford, Second Vice President; Gina Shaw, Secretary; Mary McGrath, Treasurer. Thirty committee chairpersons who oversee 25 committees support the officers.

With a portion of profits from the sale of the volunteer cookbook "Garden of Eatin" Los Vols donated a bench in The Arboretum Herb Garden. You can find the cookbook with a divine dessert recipe for "Arboretum Dirt" in The Arboretum Gift Shop.

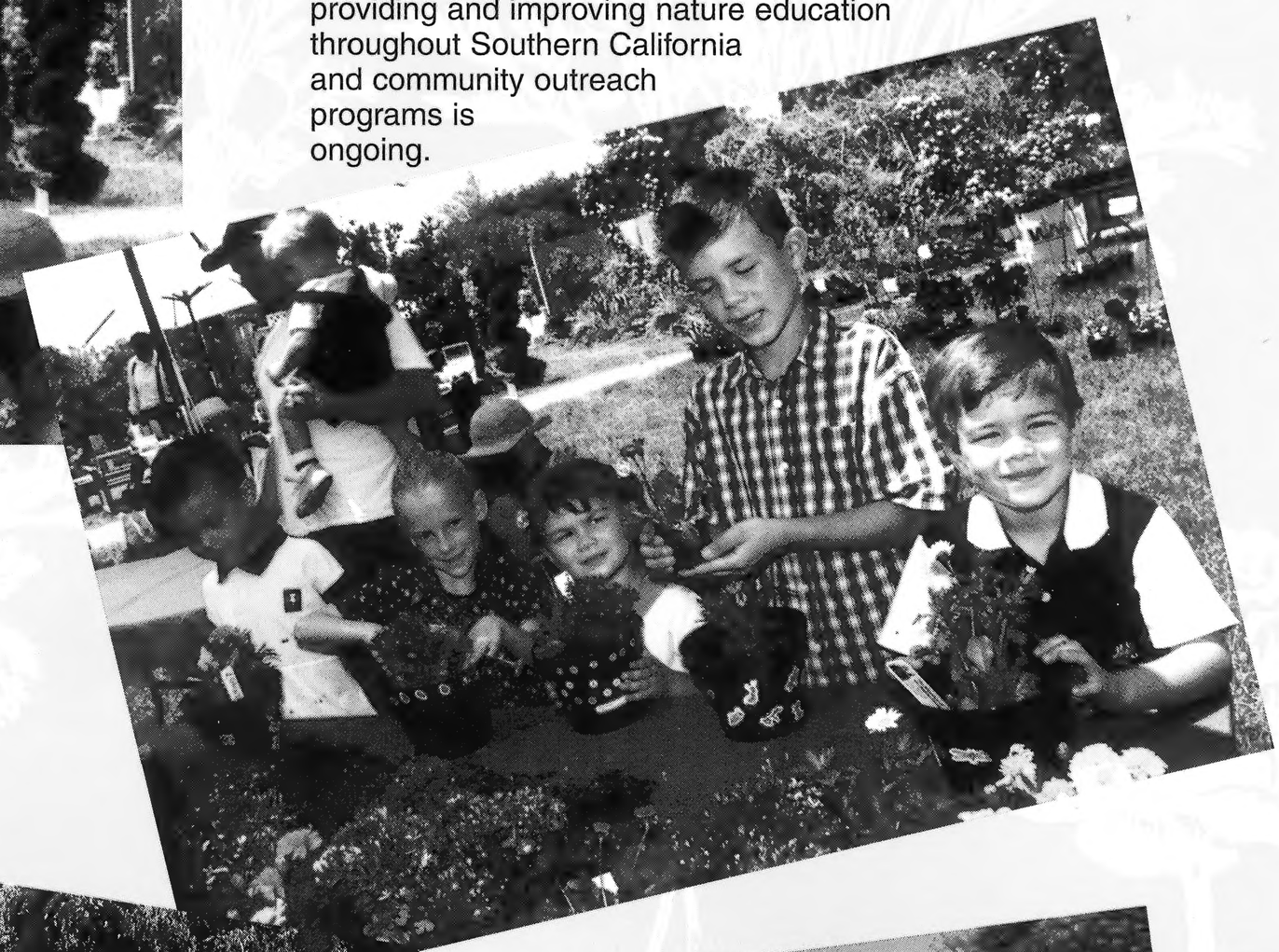
2001-2002 Goals

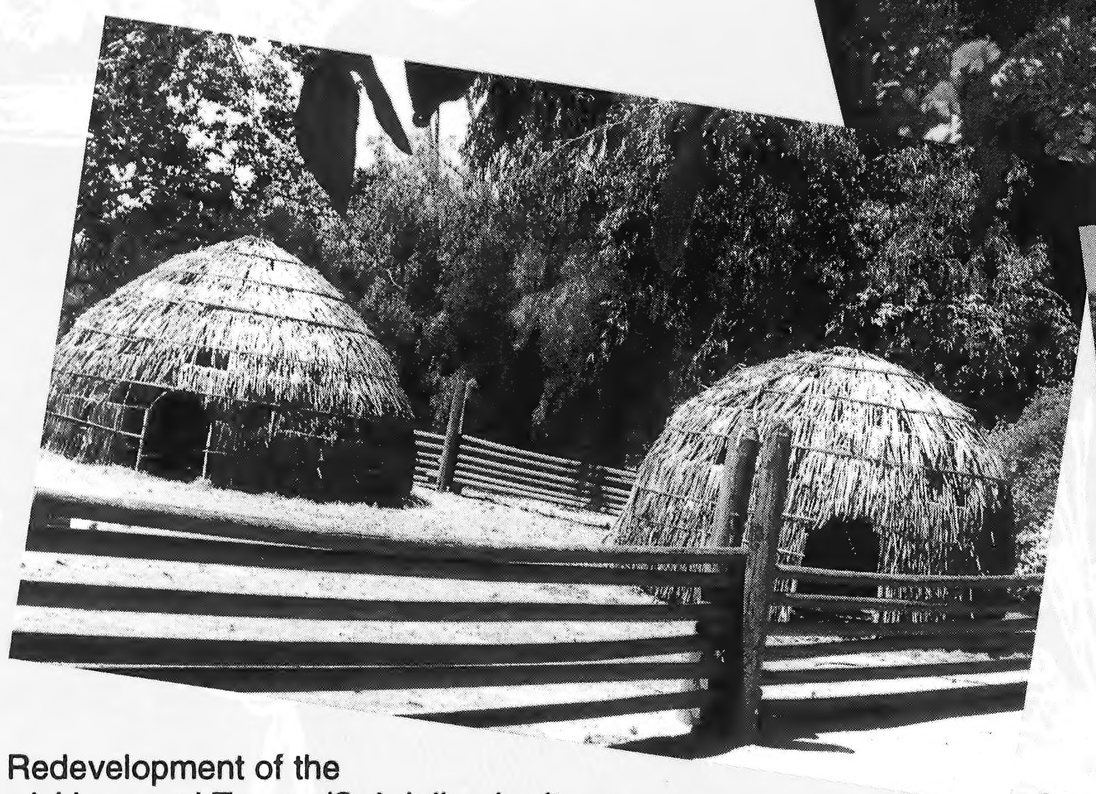
There are several goals for the coming year that will continue to enhance The Arboretum grounds plant collection and education programs.



Plant labeling and interpretive signage will be a focus in the coming year with ethnobotany becoming a central theme to the signage. In addition, updating of the plant records database through ongoing mapping activities will continue.

Increased participation in organizations such as Partners in Nature Education (PINE) dedicated to providing and improving nature education throughout Southern California and community outreach programs is ongoing.





Redevelopment of the wickiups and Tongva/Gabrielino heritage site adjacent to the adobe courtyard is planned.





The preservation of The Arboretum's early California historical buildings, including the Hugo Reid Adobe, is a focus for the coming year. Fund raising to ensure their long-term presence is underway.

Increased efforts towards a "Least Toxic Best Practices" approach to cultivation will include mulching, organic weed abatement and fertilizing programs, greenwaste composting and conversion of 20% of the Arboretum to automated irrigation.

OUR PATRONS AND SUPPORTERS

We gratefully acknowledge and thank these generous individuals, corporations and organizations,who have supported our Annual Fund Drive, Baldwin Bonanza, and General Fund Donations.

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To the thousands of valued members and friends, thank you for your support, in-kind gifts and services. The Foundation also extends special appreciation to all of our Staff and County employees who generously contribute to the mission of The Arboretum.

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September 30, 2001

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are all fortunate that Southern California is wonderfully rich in resources. As we move forward, we offer special thanks to law firm of Latham & Watkins -- and to their lawyers and staff -- for the outstanding legal services they have contributed to The Arboretum during the last year. Not only did they assist the foundation in changing its name a year ago, and advise us on matters pertaining to the foundation's endowment and reserve funds, they worked very hard and well on our behalf to put in place our recently-concluded agreement with Nancy Goslee Power & Associates for the preparation of The Arboretum's conceptual long range plan.

The projects Latham & Watkins has helped us with have all been important and contribute significantly to The Arboretum's continuing progress toward its goal of becoming a truly world-class arboretum and botanic garden serving all of Southern California.

In recognition of their services during the last year, with an estimated value of approximately $75,000, we are pleased to welcome Latham & Watkins as a premier-level corporate friend of The Arboretum.

With our thanks and appreciation,

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